

10.29.03

**Department of Administrative Services**  
***Requests for Examination of Public Records (Open Records) Policy***  
**October 29, 2003**

**Open Records Request Policy.** This policy covers all employees of the Department of Administrative Services, and will provide direction on responding to a request for examination of public records under Chapter 22, Code of Iowa.

**Goal.** The goal or purpose of this policy is to assure that the DAS responds to open records requests in a timely and appropriate manner.

**Policy Terms And Conditions.** DAS takes seriously its commitment to follow the requirements of the open records law under Chapter 22. Only those records that have been deemed confidential pursuant to the statute are not required to be released in response to a request. The statute lists 46 exceptions to the open records law.

**Process to Respond to an Inquiry from the Media.** All requests for information from the media (newspapers, magazines, radio and/or televisions stations) shall be directed immediately to the Marketing and Communications Director for DAS.

**Process to Respond to an Inquiry from Citizens, Including Businesses.** Requests for access to a public record may be made in person, in writing or by telephone. Employees shall not ask why inspection of, or access to the record has been made, but should try to get as much information as possible about what type of information is included in the request. The request should be forwarded to your supervisor, and legal counsel should be consulted if any questions arise.

Upon receipt of a request for access to a public record, supervisors will promptly take all reasonable steps to preserve a public record while the request is pending. Responses to the request should be made within 10 business days. The Code allows for a twenty (20) calendar days delay if you are determining whether a confidential record should be made available to the requestor.

**Availability of a Public Record.** Open records will be available to the public during customary office hours, which are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding state designated holidays. Immediate access to records may be affected by good faith efforts to identify the correct records to respond to the request; locating the specific records requested; determination of whether the request involves confidential records identified by the statute; or, an inability to quickly process the request due to computer technology restrictions, or absence of staff knowledgeable about the documents or information.

**Fees.** If the request requires research, or if the office cannot readily retrieve the record(s), the requester will be advised of this fact. A reasonable fee may be charged to the requestor of the record for time spent retrieving an open record, and supervising the public examination of an open record. Copying fees may be charged to the requester at a cost not to exceed the cost of providing the service. The costs may include the actual photocopying charges, hourly rate of person performing the copying, etc. If it is determined that the fees will exceed \$250.00, request for payment may be made prior to retrieval and photocopying of such records.

**Compliance Levels.** Requests and responses for examination of public records or copies of records shall be documented by giving to the Director the name of the requester, the employee responding to the request, the information requested, and the response.